

The Bulletin

The official publication of The Perfins Club, Inc., APS affiliate 57

and scavenged parts. This is its story.

I have wanted to have a perforator for quite a while, but unfortunately, the price has been out of my reach. Early in my quest, I contacted the successor to Cummins, the Cummins-Allison Corporation. Cummins was able to fill my request. The company's advertising covers Perforators, Check Signers, Check Endorsers, Form Bursters, Paper Shredders, Coin Wrappers, and Currency Counters. Cummins-Allison's sales representative had two suggestions, one hand operated and the other power operated. Both of the devices have other intended uses. They are used for canceling documents such as bank passbooks and checks. The hand operated device, Cummins 88 Cub Series, is described as:

This low cost, manual perforator efficiently and permanently marks your documents. The small holes or perforations which form letters and/or numbers are easy to read and never can be erased or smudged. In addition, it's the fastest way to mark multiple pages. Simply insert a set of documents into the unit and each page is clearly and accurately marked.

Anchor Perfin

John Lyding (L126)

The perfin pattern shown to the left is not listed in *The Catalog of United States Perfins*. It is a new (1995) pattern and unlike many other new patterns this one was not made from another device nor is it a jury rig made from found



There were two problems associated with this device. First, while I could order it with any design that I wanted up to a five die head, the holes were larger than those permitted by the Postal Service. The second problem was the price of close to \$900.00. The Cub Series has been discontinued, probably because of dwindling sales. After hearing the price of the hand operated version, I did not consider the power operated devices even though one of those models could be purchased with changeable numbers such as might be used with a dater or canceler. Power operated models start at several thousand dollars.

I wrote to the British manufacturers that I know about, Sloper's and Baddeley Brothers. Too late,

the former had gone out of business and the latter no longer produces perforators. Upon hearing this, I discontinued the search for several years. During that period of time several members wrote requesting information on obtaining a perforator. In fact, *The Perfins Bulletin* ran several articles on obtaining a perforator. Finally in 1993, the Perfins Club started its own search for a device to use at our 40th. Anniversary at VAPEX '93. My interest was reignited and I wrote to several overseas Club members seeking assistance. I received several "sorry, can't help" responses and one "I will see what I can do." The latter, from Chris Carr (LM9), was eventually followed by a letter describing a Chainstream Model FD3 perforating device and accompanied by a quote of £120 which included shipping and handling.

Evelyn, knowing that I had been frequenting antique stores and shows hoping to find a device told me to go ahead, buy it and to consider this as my Christmas present. I then wrote back to Chris giving him the go ahead and forwarding my design drawing. In the design, I decided to take the Postal Services "one half square inch" size limitation to the maximum (.071 inches x .071 inches equals .5041 inches square). If you are thinking of acquiring a perforator, I would suggest designing one which is $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ ". My next step, getting a sterling draft, is an example of Murphy's Rule, "Whatever can possibly go wrong will."

I knew how to get a sterling draft, after all I had been getting foreign drafts from Thomas Cook in Baltimore off and on for years. No problem, I had two choices. I could go to my bank and get a cashier's check to cover the draft and mail that to Cook or I could go to Baltimore and pay in cash, charge card, or personal check. Since currency rates change daily, a cashier's check costs \$15.00 and I can park a hour in Baltimore for \$2.00 the solution was obvious. I would take an afternoon off, drive the ten miles into the city, and get the draft in person.

The day arrived, I left work at 1:30 pm and within 20 minutes, I pulled into a parking garage a block away from Cook's. After a brisk sunny 5 minute walk, I grab the door knob at Cook's, turn and pull and the door refused to budge. I pull again with the same result. Only then do I try to peer into the darkened interior of the office. Only then do I notice the note taped to the inside of the dusty door. "Closed - For information call..." and an 800 number is scribbled below. I go next door and inquire. A clerk informs me that they moved out at

least a year ago. While Cook still maintains offices in Washington, DC and other US cities, in Baltimore they are gone just like the NFL Colts.

Oh well, not to worry, there are a ton of banks in Baltimore especially here in center city. Might as well pick one in which I have an account. Of course, Nation's Bank who holds my home equity loan, was several blocks further away from the parking garage. So its off to the bank, up the stairs, tell the greeter what I want, and I am led into a glass lined office. Pleasant young lady interviews me and responds certainly. She makes a telephone call to the foreign draft department, several calculations on a computer, prints the draft and the announces that will including the \$15.00 service charge that will be \$201.00. Oh well, I paid a service charge of \$6.00 last time. Out comes my checkbook, I write check for \$201.00 and hand it to the lady. Response, this isn't written on Nation's Bank, I can only take a check drawn on our bank. I reply that, I have a home equity loan and a safe deposit box with the bank. Sorry, not acceptable. I inquire, how about charging it on master card. Her reply, you can get a cash advance on the card. I reply, "I have never done that and would rather like to talk to your supervisor about this."

The lady got up and walked to an other glass enclosed cubical several doors away. I see her talk to a man who looks at my check, driver's license, gold master card and calling card. He looks up and peers over his glasses at me and then shakes his head no. I decide to take my first cash advance ever to save time. Another \$4.02 down the tubes. Eventually, I received my sterling draft, get up and leave. The walk back to the parking garage is complicated by a rain shower. The delay at the bank ran the parking garage fee up to \$8.00 - 1st. hour \$2.00, 2nd. hour \$3.00, all day \$8.00. - another \$6.00 down the tubes.

I send the draft to Chris in the next mail. Chris holds up his part of the bargain, the device arrives in a well padded box complete with nice British stamps including two £5.00 Windsor Castles in short order.

The perforator is a Chainstream Model FD3. It is heavy, well made and with the exception of a rubber cover on the operating lever is constructed entirely of metal. I am extremely well please with the device and the assistance that Chris provided. There is sufficient width for this to be a two or perhaps three head device; however, should I order another, I would probably go for a single head on

the thought that the device will be more durable. Because of the construction, I find that coil stamps are easier to punch than sheet stamps. Single definitives are hard to punch without causing a split or partial.

Chris Carr has offered to assist other members in acquiring a perforator. Write to: Mr. Chris Carr; 27 Lower Road; Temple Ewell; Dover, Kent CT16 3DX; England for details and enclose a dollar bill to cover postage, etc.

If you would like to obtain a copy of my anchor perfin, please send me an self addressed envelope and with 32¢ return postage and any amount for other postage stamps that you would like to have punched. I will keep the stamps that you send and replace them with whatever perforated stamps I am currently using. Because of the difficulty of lining up stamps, I will not perforate the stamps you send. I will not perforate used stamps or stamps that have been withdrawn from usage. Individuals who do not have access to US postage stamps may send two or more IRCs.